3. Eng. Poetry vol 50.

A

PARODY

ON

GRAY's ELEGY.

BY

AN OXONIAN.

LONDON.

Printed for the AUTHOR, and sold by J. WHEBLE,
No. 22, FLEET STREET.

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GREY's ELEGY.

THE Bell now tolls the hour of cloſing gates,
With jarring ſound the porter turns the key,
He in his dreary manſion ſlumb'ring waits,
And ſlowly, ſternly quits it, tho' for me!

Now ſhine the ſpires beneath the paly moon,
And through the Cloyſters peace and ſilence reign,
Save where ſome fidler ſcrapes a drowſy tune,
Or feſtive bowls inſpire the jovial ſtrain:

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Save that from yonder cobweb-mantled room,
Where ſleeps a ſtudent in profound repoſe,
Oppreſs'd with ale, wide echoes through the gloom,
The droning muſic of his vocal noſe.

Within thoſe walls where, through the glimm'ring ſhade,
Appear the pamphlets in a mould'ring heap,
Each in his narrow cell till morning laid,
The peaceful Fellows of the College ſleep.

The tinkling bell ~~proclaiming early pray'rs~~,
The noiſy ſervants rattling o'er their heads,
The calls of buſineſs, and domeſtic cares,
Ne'er rouſe theſe ſleepers from their drowſy beds.

No chatt'ring females crowd *their* ſocial fire,
No dread have *they* of diſcord or of ſtrife;
Unknown the names of huſband or of ſire,
Unfelt the joys or *plagues* of married life.

Oft

Oft have *they* baſk'd beneath theſe ſunny walls,
Oft have the benches bow'd beneath their weight;
How jocund ſtill their looks when dinner calls,
How ſmoak the cutlets on their crouded plate!

But let not Temp'rance too diſdainful hear
How long their feaſts, or compotations laſt,
Nor you, ye Fair, with a contemptuous ſneer,
On theſe *unmarry'd* men reflections caſt.

~~The plenteous fortune, and the beauteous~~ face,
Themſelves confeſs it, and their lives bemoan,
Too oft' are won by ſcarlet and by lace:
Theſe ſons of ſcience ſhine in *black* alone.

Forgive, ye Fair, th' involuntary fault,
If *theſe* no feats of gaiety diſplay,
Where, through proud Ranelagh's wide echoing vault,
Melodious ****** trills her quav'ring lay.

Say

Say, is the ſword well ſuited to the band?
Does 'broider'd coat agree with ſable gown?
Should Dreſden laces ſhade a *churchman's* hand?
Or Learning's vot'ries ape the beaux of town?

Perhaps, indeed, ev'n *here* might yet be found,
Some who *have* mingled in light folly's train;
Some who *have* tripp'd in the fantaſtic round,
And join'd the light, the giddy, and the vain.

But Knowledge now has fill'd each vacant mind
With Rome's rich ſpoils and Truth's exalted views;
Fir'd them with tranſports of a nobler kind,
And bade them ſlight all Females but the Muſe.

Full many a lark, high tow'ring to the ſky,
Unheard, unheeded, greets th' approach of light;
Full many a ſtar, unnotic'd, gleams on high,
In yon bright galaxy that decks the night.

Nor

Some future Herring, who, with dauntleſs breaſt,
Rebellion's torrent ſhall, with zeal oppoſe;
Some mute, untutor'd Lyttleton may reſt,
Some Pelham, dreadful to his country's foes.

Nor think that FORTUNE here is niggard grown,
Since many a youth full *kindly* ſhe confines;
Forbids in Patriot's guiſe t' inſult the throne,
And hide, with Freedom's maſk, the worſt deſigns.

As *yet*, at leaſt, far off from factious ſtrife,
They paſs, in ſcientific lore, the day;
Or, taſte the joys of ſweet convivial life,
Or, with Apollo and the Muſes ſtray.

Ev'n theſe, their books, from cobwebs to protect,
Inclos'd by doors of glaſs, in Doric ſtyle;
With fluted pillar rais'd, and bronzes deck'd,
Implore the paſſing tribute of a ſmile.

Oft' are their authors names (tho' richly bound)
Miſ-ſpelt by rude mechanics want of care;
And many' a catalogue is ſtrew'd around,
To teach th' inquiring gueſt what books are there.

Reports attract the Lawyer's parting eyes,
Novels Lord Fopling and Sir Plume require;
For Songs and Plays the voice of Beauty cries,
And Senſe and Nature Grandiſon deſire.

For who, to ſtupid Ignorance a prey,
E'er ſcorns ſuch dear delights within theſe walls?
Or who but wiſhes to prolong his ſtay,
With longing, ling'ring looks, where ſcience calls?

For *thee*, who, mindful of thy lov'd compeers,
Doſt in theſe lines their artleſs tale relate;
If chance, with prying ſearch, in future years,
Some antiquarian ſhou'd inquire thy fate,

Haply

Haply ſome friend may ſhake his hoary head,
And ſay; 'Each morn' unchill'd by froſts he ran,
With hoſe ungarter'd, o'er yon turfy bed,
To reach the chapel---ere the pſalms began:

'There, in the arms of that lethargic chair,
Which rears its old moth-eaten back ſo high;
At noon he quaff'd three glaſſes to the fair,
And por'd upon the news with curious eye.

'Now by the fire engag'd in ſerious talk,
Or mirthful converſe, wou'd he loit'ring ſtand,
Now in the garden chuſe a ſunny walk,
Or launch the poliſh'd bowl with ſteady hand.

'One morn' we miſs'd him, at the hour of pray'r,
And in the hall, and on the fav'rite green;
Another came; nor yet within the chair,
Nor yet at bowls, nor chapel was he ſeen.

'The

'The *next*, we heard that, in a neighb'ring town,
That day to church he led a willing bride,
Whoſe worth and beauty all his wiſhes crown,
Boaſt of his youth, and glory of his pride.

'Now by his Patron's bounteous care remov'd,
He lives with beauty bleſt, and true content;
Yet, ever mindful of the place he lov'd,
Read, here, the letter which he lately ſent.'

THE LETTER.

IN rural Innocence ſecure I dwell,
Alike to Fortune and to Fame unknown;
Approving conſcience chears my humble cell,
And ſocial Bliſs has mark'd me for her own.

Next to the bleſſings of religious truth,
Two gifts mine endleſs gratitude engage;
A Wife, the dear companion of my youth,
A Son, to be the comfort of my age.

Seek not to draw me from the bleſt retreat,
In loftier ſpheres unfit, untaught to move;
Content with calm domeſtic life, where meet
The ſmiles of Friendſhip and the ſweets of Love.

FINIS.

L E T T E R.

FINIS.